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Mammoth Car Wash Expands in Alpharetta With Million-dollar SBA 7(a) Small Business Loan *-- Over 30 Employees at Company's two Locations--*

Jimmy Tester is no stranger to the car wash business. He opened his first Mammoth Hand Car Wash & Detail Salon 11 years ago, which is still in operation on South Main Street in Alpharetta.

But while his car wash business has been successful, it could only handle about three vehicles at a time because of limited space.

Three years ago Tester started making plans for a second Mammoth location, one that would be triple the size of the original store with space for 9-10 cars to be hand washed and a three-car detail bay for buffing/polishing. Tester viewed his new car wash as more than just a state-of-art facility. Designed by an architect, his new location would serve as a model for taking his business into the national franchise arena for the high-end market of luxury automobiles.

With the help of his wife, a University of Georgia graduate, and his bank, Tester put the numbers together to cover a prime acre lot he had found in the heart of Alpharetta that would contain a new 7,000 square-foot car wash with parking.

Armed with a solid business plan, Tester talked to loan officers at BB&T Bank about his idea for a new high-end car wash. "They were impressed, they thought it would work," he recalled.

BB&T then suggested he use an SBA guaranteed loan under the agency's 7(a) Loan Program. With this financing, the bank got a 75 percent guarantee on the \$1 million loan it made to Tester to buy the land and construct his building.

"The SBA guarantee was a big factor," said Tester. "It helped the bank make the decision to make the loan to us...it certainly reduced their risk." It also helped that the same bank had made an earlier, conventional loan to Tester to buy out his partner in the first car wash.

To make the new car wash a reality, Tester was able to find 10 investors to supply an additional \$500,000 to cover the remaining start-up expenses for his new car wash/detail shop. The facility opened on April 1st at 2145 Old Milton Parkway only a block and a half from his first car wash in Alpharetta.



“I’m very optimistic,” says Tester of his new location. “In our first two months of business, we are up to 80-85 cars a day.”

As far as services, the two locations offer basically the same thing. The big differences in the two locations, according to Tester, are the amenities at the new store which include a modern waiting room with plasma TV.

Tester, who lives in Roswell, moved throughout the country during his father’s career in the Air Force. He came to Atlanta in 1985 after graduating from high school in Gray, Tennessee.

Before he opened his first car wash, Tester ran a valet parking company for four years and had a large night club as his prime customer. Even though he is a seasoned entrepreneur, Tester attended the Art Institute of Atlanta rather than a business school. He continues to do oil paintings as a hobby.

Tester is married to Susi Albisu and they have two children.

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